

Claims

1. System (1) for the graduated, usage-equivalent licensing of multifunctional and/or expandable software products (11) having
- 5 - first means (2) for detecting functionality used and for comparing this with already licensed functionality of a software product (11),
- second means (3) for providing information about functionality used but not yet licensed,
- third means (4) for generating lime-limited authorization to use
- 10 functionality not yet licensed,
- fourth means (5) for generating an order (23) and/or a request for an offer (24) to a licensor (21),
- fifth means (6) for the production of a license by the licensor (21), and
- 15 - sixth means (7) for permanently authorizing use of the functionality licensed by the system (1).

2. System according to Claim 1
- characterized in that
- 20 the system (1) has been provided for the graduated licensing of a standard framework (11), with said standard framework (11) serving to integrate software applications (12) for a production process based on application-specific adapters (13).

- 25 3. System according to one of Claims 1 or 2
- characterized in that
- the first means (2) have been provided for detecting the presence of a new instance of the software product or, as the case may be, standard
- framework (11).

- 30 4. System according to one of Claims 1 or 2
- characterized in that
- the first means (2) have been provided for detecting the use of an adapter base (14) of the software product or, as the case may be,
- 35 standard framework (11).

5. System according to one of Claims 1 or 2

c h a r a c t e r i z e d i n t h a t

the first means (2) have been provided for detecting the expansion of the functionality of the software product or, as the case may be, standard framework (11).

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6. System according to one of Claims 1 to 5

c h a r a c t e r i z e d i n t h a t

the second means (3) have been provided for informing a user (22) by means of a dialog window about functionality used by said user (22) but not yet licensed and to request said user (22) to obtain a license for the functionality used.

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7. System according to one of Claims 1 to 6

c h a r a c t e r i z e d i n t h a t

15 the third means (4) have been provided for issuing a provisional license for a period of time needed for handling the order and for generating and installing a permanently valid license.

8. System according to one of Claims 1 to 7

20 c h a r a c t e r i z e d i n t h a t

the fourth means (5) have been provided for e-mailing the licensor (21) an order (23) for the granting of a license.

9. System according to Claim 8

25 c h a r a c t e r i z e d i n t h a t

a customer-specific account has been provided for automatically debiting the license fee due following receipt of an e-mailed order.

10. System according to Claim 8 or 9

30 c h a r a c t e r i z e d i n t h a t

a card on which a pre-paid amount is registered has been provided as the customer account.

11. System according to one of Claims 1 to 7

35 c h a r a c t e r i z e d i n t h a t

the fourth means (5) have been provided for e-mailing the licensor (21) a request (24) for an offer (25) to grant a license.

12. System according to one of Claims 1 to 11

c h a r a c t e r i z e d i n t h a t

the fifth means (6) have been provided for granting a license for

5 producing a license key.

13. System according to one of Claims 1 to 12

c h a r a c t e r i z e d i n t h a t

seventh means (8) have been provided for disabling the newly used

10 functionality if licensing is not carried out by the licensor (21) within
a specified period of time.

14. System according to one of Claims 1 to 13

c h a r a c t e r i z e d i n t h a t

15 the system (1) has been provided for iterative use by a primary user

(22p) if additional functionality is provided on the basis of the

software product or, as the case may be, standard framework (11) by said

primary user (22p) for secondary users (22s), with use being effected by
generating secondary licenses.

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15. System according to Claim 14

c h a r a c t e r i z e d i n t h a t

the system (1) has been provided for provisioning a license key function

(10) for the primary user (22p) for the specifying of a licensing

25 identity by said primary user (22p).

16. System according to one of Claims 14 or 15

c h a r a c t e r i z e d i n t h a t

the system (1) has been provided for the flexible scalability of the

30 secondary licenses by the primary user (22p).

17. System according to one of Claims 14 to 16

c h a r a c t e r i z e d i n t h a t

eighth means (9) have been provided for apportioning the license fees to

35 be paid to the licensor (21) and primary user (21) by the secondary user
(22s).

18. System according to Claim 17

characterized in that

apportioning of the license fees has been provided via web licensing service.

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19. Method (1) for the graduated, usage-equivalent licensing of multifunctional and/or expandable software products (11) comprising the following steps:

- 10 - detecting the used functionality of the software product (11) and comparing this with its already licensed functionality,
- providing information about functionality used but not yet licensed,
- generating time-limited authorization to use functionality not yet licensed,
- 15 - generating an order (23) and/or a request for an offer (24) to a licensor (21),
- production of a license by the licensor (21), and
- permanently authorizing use of the functionality licensed by the system (1).

20 20. Method according to Claim 19

characterized in that

a standard framework (11) serving to integrate software applications (12) for a production process based on application-specific adapters (13) is licensed.

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21. Method according to one of Claims 19 or 20

characterized in that

the presence of a new instance of the software product or, as the case may be, standard framework (11) is detected.

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22. Method according to one of Claims 19 or 20

characterized in that

the use of an adapter base (14) of the software product or, as the case may be, standard framework (11) is detected.

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23. Method according to one of Claims 19 or 20

characterized in that

the expansion of the functionality of the software product or, as the case may be, standard framework (11) is detected.

24. Method according to one of Claims 19 to 23

5 c h a r a c t e r i z e d i n t h a t
a user (22) is informed by means of a dialog window about functionality used by said user (22) but not yet licensed and is requested to obtain a license for the functionality used.

10 25. Method according to one of Claims 19 to 24

c h a r a c t e r i z e d i n t h a t
a provisional license is issued for a period of time needed for handling the order and for generating and installing a permanently valid license.

15 26. Method according to one of Claims 19 to 25

c h a r a c t e r i z e d i n t h a t
an order (23) for the granting of a license is e-mailed to the licensor (21).

20 27. Method according to Claim 26

c h a r a c t e r i z e d i n t h a t
the license fee due is debited automatically from a customer-specific account following receipt of an e-mailed order (23).

25 28. Method according to Claim 26 or 27

c h a r a c t e r i z e d i n t h a t
a card on which a pre-paid amount is registered has been provided as the customer account.

30 29. Method according to one of Claims 19 to 25

c h a r a c t e r i z e d i n t h a t
a request (24) for an offer (25) to grant a license is e-mailed to the licensor (21).

35 30. Method according to one of Claims 19 to 29

c h a r a c t e r i z e d i n t h a t
a license key is produced.

31. Method according to one of Claims 19 to 30

characterized in that

a newly used functionality will be disabled if licensing is not carried
5 out by the licensor (21) within a specified period of time.

32. Method according to one of Claims 19 to 31

characterized in that

a primary user (22p) issues secondary licenses within the scope of the
10 system (1) if additional functionality is provisioned for secondary users
(22s) on the basis of the software product or, as the case may be,
standard framework (11).

33. Method according to Claim 32

15 characterized in that

a license key function (10) is provisioned for the primary user (22p) for
specifying a licensing identity.

34. Method according to one of Claims 32 or 33

20 characterized in that

the secondary licenses can be flexibly scaled by the primary user (22p).

35. Method according to one of Claims 32 to 34

characterized in that

25 the license fees to be paid by the secondary user (22s) to the licensor
(21) and primary user (22p) are apportioned.

36. Method according to Claim 35

characterized in that

30 apportioning takes place via a web licensing service.

37. Standard framework (11) for integrating software applications (12),

with said standard framework being provided for participating in a system
(1) for graduated, usage-equivalent licensing.

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38. Standard framework according to Claim 37

characterized in that

the standard framework has

- first means (2) for detecting functionality used and for comparing this with already licensed functionality of a standard framework (11),
 - 5 - second means (3) for providing information about functionality used but not yet licensed,
 - third means (4) for generating time-limited authorization to use functionality not yet licensed, and
 - fourth means (5) for generating an order and/or a request for an offer to a licensor (21).
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39. Standard framework according to one of Claims 37 or 38
c h a r a c t e r i z e d i n t h a t
the first means (2) have been provided for detecting the presence of a
15 new instance of the standard framework (11).

40. Standard framework according to one of Claims 37 or 38
c h a r a c t e r i z e d i n t h a t
the first means (2) have been provided for detecting the use of an
20 adapter base (14) of the standard framework (11).

41. Standard framework according to one of Claims 37 or 38
c h a r a c t e r i z e d i n t h a t
the first means (2) have been provided for detecting the expansion of the
25 functionality of the standard framework (11).

42. Standard framework according to one of Claims 37 to 41
c h a r a c t e r i z e d i n t h a t
the second means (3) have been provided for informing a user (22) by
30 means of a dialog window about functionality used by said user (22) but
not yet licensed and to request said user (22) to obtain a license for
the functionality used.

43. Standard framework according to one of Claims 37 to 42
35 c h a r a c t e r i z e d i n t h a t

the third means (4) have been provided for issuing a provisional license for a period of time needed for handling the order and for generating and installing a permanently valid license.

5 44. Standard framework according to one of Claims 37 to 43

c h a r a c t e r i z e d i n t h a t

the fourth means (5) have been provided for e-mailing the licensor (21) an order (23) for the granting of a license.

10 45. Standard framework according to one of Claims 37 to 43

c h a r a c t e r i z e d i n t h a t

the fourth means (5) have been provided for e-mailing the licensor (21) a request (24) for an offer (25) to grant a license.

15 46. Standard framework according to one of Claims 37 to 45

c h a r a c t e r i z e d i n t h a t

seventh means (8) have been provided for disabling the newly used functionality if licensing is not carried out by the licensor (21) within a specified period of time.

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47. Standard framework according to one of Claims 37 to 46

c h a r a c t e r i z e d i n t h a t

the standard framework (11) has been provided for iterative use by a primary user (22p) if additional functionality is provided on the basis
25 of the standard framework (11) by said primary user (22p) for secondary users (22s).

48. Standard framework according to Claim 47

c h a r a c t e r i z e d i n t h a t

30 the standard framework (11) has been provided for provisioning a license key function (10) for the primary user (22p) for specifying a licensing identity.

49. Standard framework according to one of Claims 47 or 48

35 c h a r a c t e r i z e d i n t h a t

the standard framework (11) has been provided for the scaling of secondary licenses by the primary user (22p).